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Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable JEANNE SHAHEEN, a Senator from the State of New Hampshire.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

O God, who has blessed us abundantly with inner joy and an outer supply of all good things, we are grateful for Your helping us in our poor attempts to do Your will. Lord, forgive the things that keep us divided, the false pride that leads from unity. Give us a yearning for a life shaped and supported by a will better than our own.

Guide our Senators during today's labors. Help them know the strengthening joys of Your spirit. Keep them from being intimidated by the world's problems and threats, because You have overcome the world.

We pray in Your great Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable JEANNE SHAHEEN led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. INOUE).

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, December 6, 2011.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable JEANNE SHAHEEN a Senator from the State of New Hampshire, to perform the duties of the Chair.

DANIEL K. INOUE,
President pro tempore.

Mrs. SHAHEEN thereupon assumed the chair as Acting President pro tempore.

Mr. REID. Madam President, I note the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Madam President, following leader remarks, the Senate will be in a period of morning business until 11 a.m. this morning. The majority will control the first half and the Republicans will control the second half.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

I ask unanimous consent that the order be changed to allow both sides a half an hour.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REID. Following morning business, the Senate will be in executive session to consider the nomination of Caitlin Halligan to be a judge for the District of Columbia Circuit. At noon there will be a cloture vote. I want to make sure that the consent I asked doesn't change that at all. There will be a little less time to debate that, but I think it will be sufficient. So at noon there will be a cloture vote on Halligan.

Following the vote, the Senate will recess until 2:15 this afternoon to allow for our weekly caucus meetings.

MEASURE PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—S. 1944

Mr. REID. I understand that S. 1944 is at the desk and due for a second reading.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will read the bill by title for the second time.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1944) to create jobs by providing payroll tax relief for middle-class families and businesses, and for other purposes.

Mr. REID. I object to any further proceedings with respect to this legislation.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Objection having been heard, the bill will be placed on the calendar under rule XIV.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Republican leader is recognized.

PAYROLL TAX EXTENSION

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, yesterday my friend the majority leader unveiled what he rather misleadingly referred to as a compromise on the payroll tax. I say it was misleading because we had to find out about it from reporters.

This was not a compromise. This was nothing more than another bill designed to fail so Democrats can have another week of fun and games on the Senate floor while tens of millions of working Americans go another week wondering whether they are going to see a smaller paycheck at the end of the year.

I have said I support this extension. I don't think working Americans should

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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